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THE MANUSCRIPTS OF BESSEL.

The manuscripts of BESSEL's communications to the *Astronomische Nachrichten*, some ninety in number, from volume II onwards, are the property of the estate of the late Professor C. F. W. PETERS. His widow, Mrs. H. PETERS (Mittletrageheim, 4, IV, Königsberg) offers these manuscripts for sale, as Professor PETERS left no son. They have all been published, and science has nothing new to expect from them. But it may be said that modern astronomical science is built on the foundations laid down in these immortal memoirs; and, out of respect for the memory of BESSEL, it is to be hoped that his manuscripts may find a permanent home in some university or observatory library, and not be dispersed among the albums of autograph collectors.

EDWARD S. HOLDEN.

1896, April 2.

A MOVABLE OBSERVATORY.

CHICAGO, May 3d.—Sixty thousand dollars have been expended on the construction and equipment of a great observatory, and a number of years of the valuable time of two noted astronomers and their assistants, will be devoted to what is expected to prove the most important astronomical expedition of the century. PERCIVAL LOWELL, of Boston, has built the observatory and great telescope, and will be one of the principal scientists on the expedition. Dr. T. J. J. SEE, of the University of Chicago, will be the other. Both are scientists of renown. Their operations will begin in July, from the movable observatory to be erected on the lofty Mexican plateau near the City of Mexico, and will probably be continued, in 1898, somewhere down in Peru.

The objects of the expedition are twofold. Mr. LOWELL will study the planet *Mars* in a systematical way that has seldom been pursued, and Dr. SEE will search the southern heavens for double stars, in the hope of doing there what BURNHAM, of Chicago, has done for the northern skies.

The observatory will have one of the most powerful telescopes in the world. The twenty-four-inch lens has just been finished by ALVAN CLARKE, the telescope-maker of Cambridgeport, Mass., and, in the test, it was shown to be superior to the twenty-six-inch glass at the Naval Observatory in Washington.—*The Chronicle*, S. F., May 4, 1896.